47. Supported Independent Living Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

This policy and procedure sets out how Australian Quality Care ensures that supports provided in supported independent living (SIL) environments take into consideration the rights and responsibilities of participants. It is also intended to provide staff with guidance on safe and supportive practices in SIL environments.

Scope

It applies to all participants of Australian Quality Care's SIL services, their family members, appointed decision makers, carers and other supporters and meets relevant legislation, regulations and Standards as set out in Schedule 1, Legislative References.

Policy

When providing services in SIL environments, Australian Quality Care will:

- work with participants in a collaborative way to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants
- ensure that risks are managed in a proactive and positive way
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of each participant and
- ensure processes are in place to maintain the workplace safety of Australian Quality Care staff.

Procedure

Supporting Participants with SIL Submissions

To ensure participants receive the initial or ongoing SIL funding they require, Australian Quality Care's [Position Title] will work collaboratively with them and their representatives to prepare a *SIL Roster of Care (RoC) Submission*. The NDIA's *Provider SIL Roster of Care (RoC) Template and Tool* must be completed as part of this submission.

Management must ensure any supporting material such as clinical assessments and reports, behavioural assessments and plans, incident reports, individual routines, police reports or *Participant Risk Assessments* are included with the *SIL RoC Submission*.

It is important that *SIL RoC Submissions* accurately reflect the needs and goals of participants, as the NDIA will use the information provided to determine what funding for SIL supports is reasonable and necessary. The *Declaration* in the *SIL RoC Template* must be explained to the participant or their nominee and included in the submission, in order for the submission to be considered by the NDIA.

Once the *SIL Roc Submission* is complete, Management must send it to the NDIA National SIL Inbox, at SIL@ndis.gov.au. Further guidance on the SIL RoC Submission process can be found in the NDIA's *Guide to using the SIL Provider Pack*.

Managing Risk and Participants with Different Needs

Each Supported Independent Living (SIL) environment providing shared accommodation for two or more participants must undergo a suitability assessment process. This process should include a thorough consideration of risks to ensure participants do not pose a risk to each other and that co-habitation does not increase their individual vulnerability.

A suitability assessment, which includes the consideration of participant-specific risks, must occur prior to a participant's entry into the SIL environment to inform decisions about their referral or placement.

The assessment process must be reviewed at least every three months, or more frequently as needed, based on the associated risks, the participant's functionality, and their preferences. Reviews must also take place following significant events, such as incidents, to ensure ongoing safety and suitability.

Participant Privacy

All participant information must be maintained in accordance with Australian Quality Care's *Information Management Policy and Procedure* and *Privacy and Dignity Policy and Procedure.*

Participants' rooms and personal belongings must be treated with the upmost respect for their individual privacy. Staff must comply with participants' privacy preferences, which may include knocking before entering the participant's room, or having individual private time during the day. Staff must not access participants' rooms or belongings without their permission, unless in an emergency or other unforeseen event.

Supporting Participants' Sexual Expression

All people, including those with disabilities, have the right to express and experience their sexuality as a normal and natural aspect of life. Staff should refer to Australian Quality Care's

Supporting Participants' Sexual Expression Policy and Procedure [or equivalent] for guidance on supporting this in SIL environments.

Behaviour Management

Participants in SIL environments may display behaviours that pose a risk to themselves or others, including staff.

Should an incident occur, staff should:

- attempt to de-escalate the situation, if it is safe to do so;
- if it is not safe, remove other participants and themselves from immediate danger
- contact their supervisor or the [Position Title]
- if safe to do so, observe the participant to monitor their safety and
- re-approach the participant only when the situation has de-escalated and it is safe to do so.

Staff must follow relevant Australian Quality Care policies and procedures for managing participant behaviour and identifying and responding to harm and incidents. These include Australian Quality Care's:

- *Positive Behaviour Support Policy and Procedure*
- *Restrictive Practices Policy and Procedure*

Staff must also take the least restrictive approach to managing behaviour through the physical environment. Participants have the right to access all areas of their home and should not be restricted from accessing certain rooms or areas. Refer to the *Implementing Behaviour Supports* and *Restrictive Practices Policy and Procedure* for more information.

House Rules

Each SIL environment is unique, depending on the participants who reside there. As such, house rules should be developed and reviewed whenever a new participant moves into the home, with all of the participants that live there. Participants should be involved as much as possible in developing the house rules. Their families or other representatives may also be involved where appropriate.

House rules may include:

- that there is 'quiet time' at certain times of the day
- that all participants will treat each other with respect
- that participants will not misuse shared resources
- that participants will, to the best of their ability, contribute to a harmonious environment within the house and
- that Australian Quality Care staff will support participants to resolve any issues in a timely manner.

It is important that SIL environments are treated as a home environment to the greatest extent possible. As such, it is not appropriate to display house rules prominently in the home. However, they should be clearly discussed and agreed with all participants and be easily accessible to all participants and their families or other representatives.

SIL in Specialist Disability Accommodation

Where SIL supports are being provided to participants in specialist disability accommodation (SDA) dwellings, the participant's *Service Agreement* must document the arrangements in place between the participant and the SDA provider.

At a minimum, the *Service Agreement* must outline the party or parties responsible and their roles (where applicable) for the following matters:

- how Australian Quality Care will work with other providers who deliver supported independent living supports to ensure the shared living arrangement is working for all tenants
- how a participant's concerns about the dwelling will be communicated and addressed
- how potential conflicts involving participants will be managed
- how changes to participant circumstances and/or support needs will be agreed and communicated
- in shared living, how vacancies will be filled, including each participant's right to have their needs, preferences and situation taken into account and
- how behaviours of concern which may put tenancies at risk will be managed, if this relevant for the participant.

SIL Operational Response - Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases or Outbreaks

Australian Quality Care will ensure it can continue to support participants and staff in the event of a suspected or confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19, through a series of preparations and approaches. See Australian Quality Care's *Infection Prevention and Control Policy and Procedure* and *AQC's Emergency & Disaster Continuity Management Plan - 2023-05-29* for further detail.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed at least annually. Reviews will incorporate staff, participant and other stakeholder feedback.

Australian Quality Care's feedback collection mechanisms, such as participant satisfaction surveys. Australian Quality Care's *Continuous Improvement Plan* will be used to record improvements identified and monitor the progress of their implementation. Where relevant, this

information will be considered as part of Australian Quality Care's service planning and delivery processes.

Related documents

- Person-Centred Supports Policy and Participant Service Charter of Rights Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Corporate Governance Policy and Procedure
- Access to Supports Policy and Procedure
- Responsive Support Provision and Support Management Policy and Procedure
- Service Agreement
- Service Agreement with Participant Policy and Procedure
- Risk Management Policy and Procedure
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure
- Emergency and Disaster Management Policy and Procedure

References

- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Specialist Disability Accommodation) Rules 2020,
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Specialist Disability Accommodation Conditions) Rule 2018,
- [NDIS (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018](#)
- [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#)